

Navy; it is for everyone who gets injured in a severe way and needs this extended rehabilitation.

So Senator STEVENS, at the end of my remarks, said:

The Senator from California is correct. She has my commitment that I will work in conference to ensure that these funds are provided for the Comprehensive Combat Casualty Care Center.

Senator INOUE then said:

I too support the Senator's request. She has my commitment that I will do my best to ensure funding is included in conference.

I believe, after speaking with them—and I have spoken to Senators MURRAY and COCHRAN about this—that this is something that just cries out for funding because our people are hurting, and it doesn't help them to be separated from their families and to have to make the trek across the country to learn how to live with these very disabling injuries. So we pray that the war will end soon. We pray that our soldiers will be coming home soon. I myself am working to see that we can begin redeploying troops immediately.

I think as the Iraqis move forward, this is a year of major transition, and they need to prove that they want freedom as much as we want it for them. They now have their government getting into place, and I would like to see the end of these casualties. I know we all feel that way. But we have to also be realistic in that we have to serve those who are continuing to come back in great need of this kind of help.

So, again, I hope all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support this effort. I look forward to working with all of you so that we can tell the Navy that their hopes and dreams for this Comprehensive Combat Casualty Care Center in San Diego at the Naval Medical Center, will, in fact, be a reality. The \$6 million we need is a very small amount when you look at the overall size and scope of this particular bill.

I yield the floor.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SUNUNU). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3616

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3616 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That amendment is now pending.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, this amendment would strike \$74.5 million

for grants to States based on their production of certain types of crops, livestock, and dairy products, which were not included in the administration's emergency supplemental request.

Let me point out again a statement of administration policy where it says:

The administration is seriously concerned at the overall funding level and the numerous unrequested items included in the Senate bill that are unrelated to the war or emergency hurricane relief needs.

Obviously, this and others have been put into this bill in a very unacceptable fashion. It has been a longstanding policy in the Senate to prohibit the practice of adding authorizing language to an appropriations bill. Nevertheless, this bill includes a massive \$3.94 billion agricultural assistance program. None of this funding under this agricultural title is included in the administration's supplemental request.

Interestingly, this nearly \$4 billion add-on, title III of the underlying bill—remember, this is a \$4 billion add-on—received a one-paragraph mention in the entire committee report accompanying the bill; one paragraph to describe 31 pages of legislative language with a \$4 billion price tag.

Let me read it for the benefit of my colleagues.

The committee recommends \$3.944 billion for emergency agriculture disaster assistance. These funds will help farmers and ranchers in States affected by recent hurricanes, drought, flood, wildfire and other natural disasters recover from resulting production losses. These funds will also assist in the removal of debris from watersheds in order to minimize the threat of flooding from future storm events. In addition, the funds will provide economic assistance to producers to compensate for high energy costs relating to agricultural production.

That last sentence is interesting. This will help farmers who have high energy costs related to agricultural production. I wonder what we are doing for the airlines, the trains, the American automobile owner, any other industry in America. We aren't doing anything for them in this emergency supplemental, but we are going to give the farmers nearly \$4 billion additional.

I am all for helping the appropriate farmers and other victims battered by hurricanes, but the agricultural assistance added in this bill is far more expansive than merely offering to help areas hit by the 2005 hurricanes, and at least the limited report language doesn't hide that fact. As my colleagues know, the USDA currently has a range of disaster assistance programs, including crop insurance programs, that are already available. Yet this bill is going to add nearly \$4 billion on top of the existing programs. In my view, the agricultural assistance funding is being used more as a vehicle to fill a voter wish list than it is to meet the urgent needs of the victims of the 2005 hurricane season. Taxpayer dollars are being allocated for agricultural subsidies and bailouts which in some cases have nothing to do with hurricane recovery.

This recovery would strike an earmark which provides \$74.5 million in agricultural assistance for grants to States, based not on the hurricane damage, not on any emergency, but based on their production of "specialty of crops, livestock and dairy products."

Why is this necessary? Have the hurricanes wiped out the specialty crop industry? What even is a specialty crop, and why does it need \$74.5 million of taxpayer funding? I hope that a specialty crop is a money tree because that is what is going to be needed to pay for this bill.

My colleagues may be interested to know that the bill defines specialty crops as anything but wheat, feedgrains, oilseeds, cotton, rice or peanuts—anything but. Why do we exclude those commodities from receiving this funding? Is sugarcane made ineligible? Are my colleagues aware that the USDA already has a specialty crop block grant program which was authorized in 2004? Under the existing program, specialty crops are defined as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and nursery crops including floriculture. The program is funded at \$17 million for the current fiscal year, and it provides for \$100,000 for each State that applies. Is there a problem with that program that I am not aware of that gives it just cause to providing it with an emergency supplemental appropriation to the tune of more than 1,000 percent above its annual appropriation?

This bill provides \$74.5 million that is to be used to award grants based on "the share of each State's total value of specialty crop, livestock, and dairy production of the United States for the 2004 crop-year, multiplied by \$74.5 million. That means the more you produce, if your crops have not been hit by a natural disaster or flooding or drought, the more money you get. That is the polar opposite of what the USDA disaster assistance programs are about.

Doesn't that fly in the face of what an emergency supplemental is for? An emergency supplemental is supposed to be about addressing needs and not about providing rewards for productivity. More importantly, why is what obviously is designed to be a nationwide agricultural funding assistance program, a program not requested by the administration, singled out in the statement of administration policy as objectionable, being included in a must-pass emergency spending bill that is supposed to address the global war on terror and hurricane recovery?

My colleagues may be interested to know that under this legislation, States can use the grant to "promote the purchase, sale or consumption of agricultural products."

I am not making this up. I am not making this up. Under this emergency supplemental bill, States can use the grant to "promote the purchase, sale, or consumption of agricultural products." Last week, I mentioned that Federal dollars had been used to paint